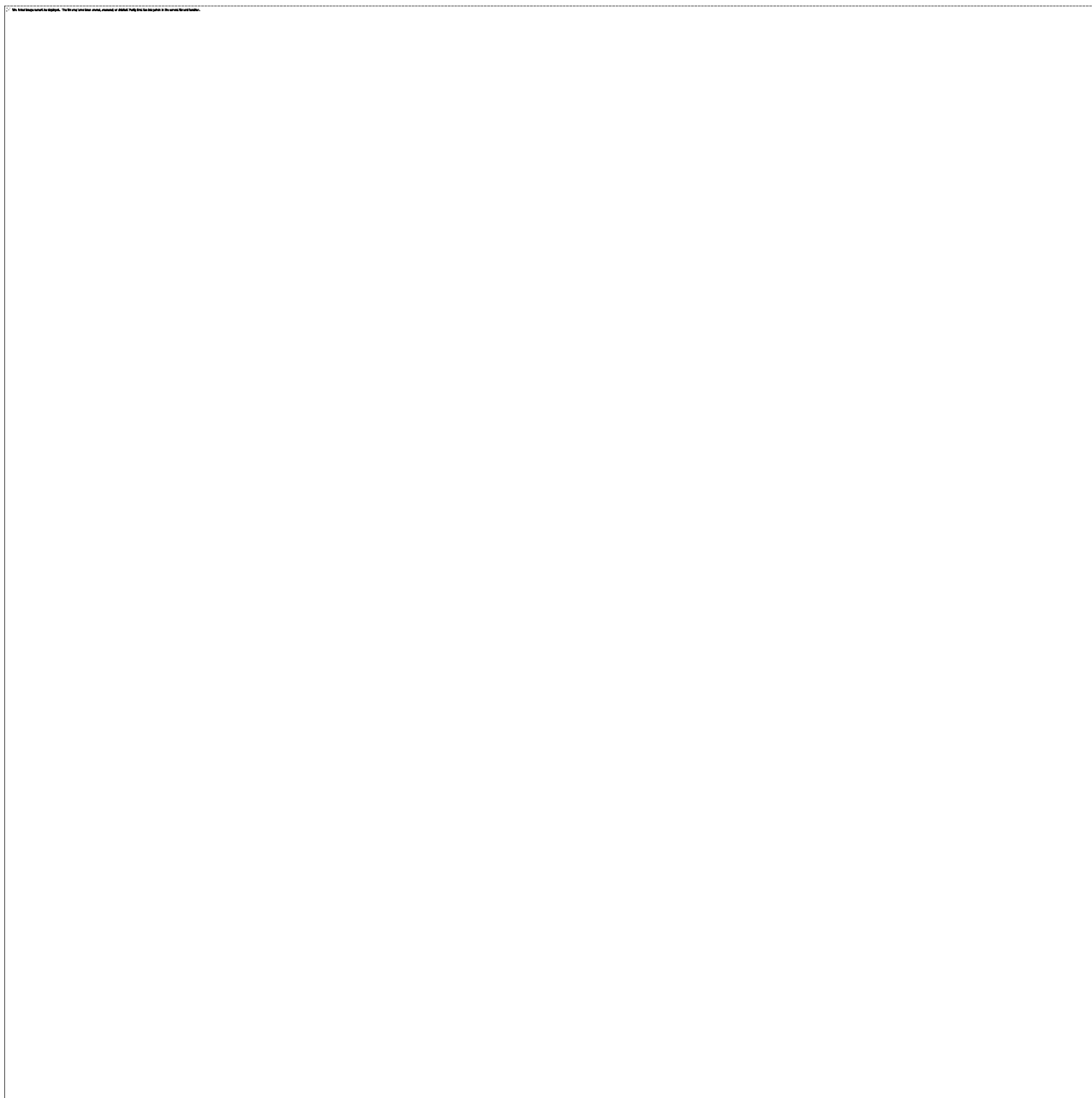


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Administrator

EPA Union Urges Administrator To Reopen Texas Research Facility.

Inside EPA (3/22) reports, "EPA's largest employee union is asking Administrator Michael Regan to reverse a Trump-era plan to relocate a federal research facility from Houston to Ada, OK, asking that he keep the lab open as part of the administration's effort to focus on environmental justice (EJ)."

EPA Region 5 Head Explains Expansive Interagency Projects.

Bloomberg Law (3/22, Lee) reports the "new head of EPA's Great Lakes region," Debra Shore, "wants to create vast demonstration projects -- perhaps as big as a city block -- that knit together various agencies' work to address climate change, promote resiliency, and protect environmental justice and public health." The plan still in its early stages, but Shore "says the buildouts will serve as proof that the federal government's various arms can unite to solve multiple problems at once." She said, "In the past, when groups have gone into, say, affordable housing units to do energy efficiency projects, they haven't also been looking at stormwater management. ... They haven't also been looking at lead paint removal or lead pipe replacement." Various "agencies like the departments of Health and Human Services and Housing and Urban Development, as well as the Army Corps of Engineers are being pulled into the project, Shore said."

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Air

State Regulators In The Northeast Optimistic About EPA's CSAPR Expansion Plan.

In a paywalled article, *Inside EPA* (3/22) reports, "Northeast state air regulators are cautiously optimistic that EPA's proposal to tighten and expand the Cross-State Air Pollution Rule (CSAPR) emissions trading program will curb interstate ozone enough to meet current limits, though industry groups are concerned about possible implementation burdens."

No Country Meets WHO Standard For Air Quality, Study Finds.

USA Today (3/22, Moya) reports, "Not a single country met the World Health Organization's guidelines for air quality in 2021, a new study suggested," and as such, "millions are breathing polluted air that does not satisfy WHO health standards, according to the report that analyzed real-time air quality of 6,475 cities" and 118 countries. Only 222 of the cities "have the average air quality that met WHO's standard, according to the study conducted by IQAir, a Swiss pollution technology company that monitors air quality." The standard set by the WHO is "that average annual readings of hazardous airborne particles (PM2.5) not exceed 5 micrograms per cubic meter."

Forbes (3/22, Hailstone) reports, "PM2.5 measurements are often used by air quality professionals as a benchmark to determine pollution levels," and "the particles have been found to be a major contributing factor to health effects such as asthma, stroke, heart and lung diseases."

The Hill (3/22, Choi) also reports.

US Cities Experienced Uptick In Air Pollution Last Year, Report Finds.

NBC News (3/22) reports, "Wildfires in the U.S. combined with the near-elimination of pandemic restrictions pushed air pollution levels in the U.S. back to pre-Covid levels in 2021, according to a report released Tuesday." IQAir "said in the report that the U.S. as a whole saw a 7 percent increase in fine particle air pollution in 2021 compared to the previous year." The report "adds to growing concern about the immediate health fallout of growing air pollution, something health experts have increasingly warned about in recent years." It "estimated that the deaths of 40,000 children under the age of 5 around the world in 2021 were linked to air pollution."

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Brownfields/Superfund/Other Cleanups + Redevelopment

EPA Proposes Removing Part Of Libby Superfund Site From Priorities List.

The **Billings (MT) Gazette** (3/22) reports the Environmental Protection Agency “has proposed to remove a part of the Superfund site at Libby from the National Priorities List.” The site “is Operable Unit 6, which...includes BNSF-owned and operated railyards in the towns of Libby and Troy and approximately 42 miles of railroad right-of-way, according to a press release from the EPA.” The agency “said the unit, which includes a former export plant, former screening plant and residential and commercial areas in Libby and Troy, has been ‘cleaned through remedial actions.’” The EPA proposed removing “the area from the priorities list because it ‘does not require any additional remedial action to protect human health and the environment and is therefore eligible to be partially deleted from the site’ and no further remediation of the unit is expected, according to the release.”

Teams From DEQ, EPA To Begin Sampling Billings Superfund Site.

The **Billings (MT) Gazette** (3/22, Rogers) reports that beginning “this month, the Montana Department of Environmental Quality and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency will be testing soil and air samples across an 855-acre oval that encompasses parts of downtown and west central Billings.” Solvents from former “dry cleaning businesses in central and downtown Billings created an underground plume covering 855 acres and stretching for about three miles. Those solvents can evaporate into the air as a potentially cancerous vapor, affecting the properties sitting on top of the plume.” The Billings plume in Montana “received federal Superfund status last fall; Montana recognized the plume that stretches around Montana Avenue and Cook Avenue as a Superfund site in 1992. It designated it as polluted to the point of needing long-term cleanup.”

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Climate Change

Farmers, Other Businesses Challenge Oregon’s New Climate Program.

The **AP** (3/21) reports a coalition of business groups, including those representing farming and ranching businesses, “wants a court to block Oregon’s plan to significantly reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Oregon Public Broadcasting reports the state’s new Climate Action Plan administrative rules, passed in December, target a 90% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions from transportation fuels and natural gas by 2050. In a petition for judicial review filed Friday, 12 industry trade groups say the rules ‘hold fuel suppliers directly accountable’ for the state’s greenhouse gas emissions.”

Climate And Conservation Groups Sue Interior Department Over Oil and Gas Leasing Report.

CNN (3/22, Nilsen) reports, “Several climate and conservation groups are suing the US Department of the Interior to get more information about the department’s November review of its oil and gas leasing program – a report that was widely criticized for sidestepping the program’s impact on the climate crisis.” The groups, represented by the Western Environmental Law Center, “filed multiple Freedom of Information Act requests last year to access correspondence between federal officials on the drafting of

the report.” They received “documents in two responses from bureaus within DOI,” but they were “redacted, Barbara Chillcott, a senior attorney at the Western Environmental Law Center, told CNN.”

Increasing Temperatures Due To Climate Change Will Lead To Earlier, Longer Pollen Seasons, Impacting Allergy, Asthma Outcomes, Study Suggests.

Healio (3/22, Rothenberg) reports “increasing temperatures as part of climate change will lead to earlier and longer pollen seasons by the end of the century, impacting allergy and asthma outcomes, according to a study” in which investigators “developed a model predicting how changes in temperature and precipitation will impact the production of 13 of the most common types of pollen between 2081 and 2100.” According to this “model, which was based on United States data from 1995 to 2014, the pollen season will start up to 40 days earlier and last up to 19 days longer due to expected temperature changes of 4°K to 6°K.”

ECB To Start Work To Add Climate Risk To Capital Buffers This Year.

Bloomberg (3/22, Comfort) reports European bank regulators are “set to start work later this year on adding climate-change risks to the framework for setting capital requirements, in a shift that would penalize lenders for failing to prepare for losses from extreme weather and the shift to clean energy.” Several members of the ECB’s supervisory board “say they expect to begin discussions in the second half of 2022 once they’ve received results from an ongoing climate stress test and accompanying review.”

China Looks To Balance Energy Security, Climate Goals.

Reuters (3/22, Xu, Chen) reports, “China aims to increase renewable power, maintain crude oil output and boost natural gas production, as it seeks to balance energy security and achieve its climate change goals.” China, the world’s top greenhouse gases emitter, “has said its carbon emission would peak by 2030, while it has said it would achieve carbon neutrality by 2060.” China’s National Development and Reform Commission said in a statement Tuesday, “We will accelerate the adjustment of the energy structure and promote energy supply security and low-carbon transformation at the same time.”

Infrastructure Law’s Proposed Climate And Equity Spending Now In The Hands Of Sates.

Politico (3/22, Colman) says President Biden “sold last year’s \$550 billion plan for new infrastructure spending by promising it will spur transformative climate and equity programs nationwide.” However, according to Politico, states “control most of the cash and may not share his goals of tackling climate change or reversing the effects of institutionalized racism.” Politico adds that “the lack of federal control over how these dollars are spent is raising doubts about whether Biden can meet his pledges, disappointing his supporters.”

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Editorial/Op Ed/ Commentary/Letters

Options For Banking Regulators On Climate Policy Going Forward.

American Banker (3/22) reports, "Moderating climate risk in the financial system and other business sectors has morphed into a political brawl." If Republicans "retake the House and/or the Senate in the midterm elections, they would have more power to stymie any of the Biden administration's climate ambitions that would rely on new legislation. At that point, Biden's regulators could have as little as two years before the next presidential election to enact the kind of financial climate risk changes it has promised." American Banker says the White House "could take advantage of the policy leeway vested in the Financial Stability Oversight Council to collect data, alter capital requirements and affect supervisory policy across multiple agencies, experts say." Yevgeny Shrager, policy counsel for Public Citizen's climate program, "said that the Treasury Department could incorporate climate change into an assessment of whether an institution is systemically risky. Shrager is urging Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen, who leads FSOC, to take aggressive steps." The piece adds that "Yellen's potential influence would lie mostly in her ability to rally the heads of the other agencies on the council, such as the Office of the Comptroller of the Currency and the Federal Deposit Insurance Corp., to take coordinated rulemaking action."

Rich Countries Must End Oil And Gas Production By 2034, Report Says.

The Washington Post's Climate 202 newsletter (3/22) reported, "Rich nations must end oil and gas production within 12 years to give the world a shot at meeting the goal of the Paris agreement – and to give poor countries a "fair chance" to replace their lost income from fossil fuels, according to a report by the Tyndall Centre for Climate Change Research at the University of Manchester released late Monday." The Post notes that the American Petroleum Institute "has urged the Biden administration to unleash fossil fuel production on federal lands and waters after Russia's invasion of Ukraine roiled global energy markets." Asked for comment on the University of Manchester report, a spokeswoman for API said in an email: "The current crisis in Europe is a clear reminder that ensuring continued access to affordable, reliable energy while tackling the climate change cannot be an either/or proposition. We can and must do both, and as populations grow and economies expand, our industry will play a critical role for decades to come in meeting rising demand for affordable, reliable and cleaner energy around the world."

Opinion: Canadian Regulators Provide Help To Investors Who Want Sustainability.

In an Opinion column in The Globe and Mail (CAN) (3/22, Tam) Ian Tam writes that investing in sustainable mutual funds and ETFs in Canada is a complicated job, but "The good news is, Canadian regulators seem to be up to the task." Tam points to the CSA's proposed changes to National Instrument 51-107, which requires "Canadian-listed issuers (of stocks and bonds) to begin reporting climate-related risks and opportunities per a standardized framework, as well as their greenhouse gas emissions." He adds, "If passed, this would result in far greater transparency for investors who wish to invest sustainably." He also mentions IIROC's move in December when it "updated its guidance for advisers around collecting client information such that it includes investor preferences for investing sustainably."

Energy Issues

EU Reportedly Unlikely To Impose Ban On Russian Oil Imports.

CNBC (3/22, Amaro) reports on its website that the European Union is “unlikely to impose an immediate oil embargo on Russia over its unprovoked invasion of Ukraine.” CNBC points out that as of 2020, “Russian oil imports accounted for about 25% of the EU’s oil purchases.” According to CNBC, “Whereas Poland and the Baltic nations are among the most vocal supporters of restricting the purchases of Russian oil, other nations – notably Germany and Hungary – are concerned about what this step would mean for prices. ‘Only a minority of countries are in favor [of an oil embargo],’ an EU official, who didn’t want to be named due to the sensitivity of the talks, told CNBC Tuesday.”

NYTimes Analysis: War In Ukraine Likely To Slow EU's Transition To Renewable Energy.

According to the New York Times (3/22, Cohen, Reed), “Moving investments away from oil, gas and coal to sustainable sources like wind and solar, limiting and taxing carbon emissions, and building a new energy infrastructure to transmit electricity are crucial to weaning Europe off fossil fuels. But they are all likely to raise costs during the transition, an extremely difficult pill for the public and politicians to swallow.” The Times adds, “The crisis that has inspired Europe to more quickly reach toward clean energy sources like wind and solar also risks pitching it backward by unwinding efforts to shut coal mines and stop drilling new oil and gas wells to replace Russian fuel and bring prices down.”

Saudis Signal OPEC+ Likely To Reject US Calls For Increased Oil Production.

Reuters (3/22, Abdallah, El Dahan, Lawler) reports that on Tuesday, the government of Saudi Arabia “emphasised...‘the essential role’ of the OPEC+ agreement in bringing balance and stability to oil markets.” According to Reuters, “The statement, a little over a week before OPEC+ is scheduled to meet, indicates little chance the grouping will decide to raise oil output at a faster pace.” Reuters says “several major consuming nations, including the United States, have called on producers to raise their output at a faster rate to help calm crude oil prices, which have soared on the back of Russia’s invasion of Ukraine.”

Fresno County Board Of Supervisors Calls On CA Officials To Support Increased Oil Production.

The Fresno (CA) Bee (3/22, Montalvo) reports the Fresno County Board of Supervisors voted unanimously on Tuesday to pass a resolution calling on California state leaders to increase the state’s oil production. At a press conference, Fresno County Board of Supervisors Chairman Brian Pacheco said the aim of the resolution is to “help offset some of the costs that our consumers and farmers and everyone else is experiencing.” In addition “to the bipartisan resolution, the supervisors called on Sacramento to ease the oil and gas industry regulations and issue more drilling permits.” While the

supervisors “said they support the ban on Russian oil imports, they also said that domestic production is a better alternative than importing oil from countries like Venezuela, Iran, and Saudi Arabia.”

The **San Joaquin Valley (CA) Sun** (3/23, Gligich) reports Fresno County Supervisor Steve Brandau said, “At the Board of Supervisors here in Fresno County, we want to see that Russian oil replaced with domestic oil.” Brandau added, “There has been some talk of going elsewhere like to Venezuela, Iran and Saudi Arabia. In my opinion, some of those actors are not much better than Russian actors, so why don’t we just produce that oil at home and refine that oil at home? We know we have the capability. It doesn’t have to be a political football. People from both sides of the isle can join together and support domestic oil.”

The **Fresno (CA) Business Journal** (3/22, Lopez) reports Fresno County Supervisor Nathan Magsig “said that aside from fuel, petroleum is the main component in many items such as clothing and asphalt. It is essential to the agriculture industry.” Magsig “said that higher gas prices are affecting those in disadvantaged and rural communities that have to drop their children off at school and drive long distances for work.” He also “said that producing more oil in California and the U.S. would reduce greenhouse gas emissions.” Magsig added, “When we need to ship oil from other countries to California, that oil has to come from ships, and those ships pollute. If we make that oil here domestically, that shipping cost and shipping pollution is not released.”

Shell Appeals Dutch Court Ruling On Emissions.

AFP (3/22) reports Shell “said Tuesday it had filed an appeal against a Dutch ruling to slash by 45 percent its worldwide aggregate carbon emissions by 2030.” In a statement Tuesday, “Shell said ‘we want to be a leader in the energy transition’ but added that it had filed an appeal against the court decision ordering it to slash worldwide aggregate carbon emissions by 45 percent by 2030 over its 2019 levels.” The company said, “Shell alone cannot directly influence the energy choices made by its customers. It is for governments to put in place the policies that bring about fundamental changes in the way society consumes energy.” It added that “recent challenges with energy supply, along with spikes in energy prices, show that to be fair and orderly, the energy transition must focus on more than reducing carbon emissions.”

Granholm Confident US Producers Will Boost Oil Supply By Year’s End.

Reuters (3/22, Gardner) reports US Energy Secretary Jennifer Granholm “said on Tuesday the Biden administration believes producers will boost U.S. oil supply by the end of the year, two weeks after she urged them to raise output quickly in the wake of the Russian invasion of Ukraine.” Granholm “said at the CERAWEEK energy conference in Houston this month that any oil and gas company that can increase supply should do so quickly after President Joe Biden banned U.S. imports of Russian oil.”

ADNOC, Germany To Accelerate Joint Development Of Clean Hydrogen.

LNG World News (3/22, Pekic) reports ADNOC “has signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) and joint study agreements (JSA) with German companies to deepen clean hydrogen collaboration.” The agreements “were announced during the visit of the German Federal minister for economic affairs and climate action Robert Habeck to the UAE.” The talks “build upon the longstanding Emirati-German Energy Partnership as well as the Ministerial Emirati-German Hydrogen Task Force from November

2021.” Germany’s hydrogen strategy “expects clean hydrogen demand of up to 3 million tonnes per annum (mtpa) by 2030.” Of that, about 60% will be imported. **World Oil** (3/22) also reports.

GE Renewable Energy’s Hydro Division Joins International Hydropower Association Campaign.

A **General Electric** (3/22) press release says “GE Renewable Energy’s Hydropower business is joining forces with organisations around the world to call for urgent investment in hydropower to combat climate change, accelerate progress towards net zero and strengthen energy security.” The International Hydropower Association’s “We can, with hydropower” campaign “will highlight how a pathway to net zero and greater energy resilience is possible by harnessing sustainable hydropower as a complement to variable renewables such as wind and solar.” GE Renewable Energy’s Hydro division President and CEO Pascal Radue said, “Now is the time for policymakers everywhere to make the argument for hydropower, alongside wind and solar power. Climate change and security of energy supply require decisions today, not tomorrow.”

TotalEnergies To Stop Buying Russian Crude, Diesel By End Of Year.

Bloomberg (3/22, Beaupuy) reports France’s TotalEnergies on Tuesday “said it will stop buying Russian crude and diesel by the end of the year, becoming the latest energy giant to shun the country’s oil in protest against the invasion of Ukraine.” The **New York Times** (3/22, Reed) reports TotalEnergies is in a “difficult position” as its Russian business, “especially liquefied natural gas investments, has been an important part of the company’s future strategy and something it has been reluctant to completely renounce.”

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Environmental Justice

PG&E Proposes Pilot Program To Help Universities Reduce Emissions.

DailyEnergyInsider (3/21, Galford) reports PG&E “last week proposed a new clean energy pilot program to help academia reduce its greenhouse gas emissions through incentives.” Under the Clean Energy Optimization Pilot, “universities would earn incentives based on their greenhouse gas reductions.” Money for the initiative “would be pulled from the approximately \$50 million of unspent, unallocated greenhouse gas auction revenues over four years.” PG&E “stated this funding would stem from the state’s Cap-and-Trade Program rather than from customer rates.”

Union, Clean Transportation Group Take Legal Action In Bid To Tighten EPA Aircraft GHG Rule.

In a paywalled article, **Inside EPA** (3/22) reports, “A clean transportation advocacy group, an airport workers’ labor union and a former senior EPA official are joining environmentalists’ and states’ legal fight to force EPA to tighten its Trump-era rule setting first-time aircraft greenhouse gas limits that fail to reduce emissions more than a business-as-usual scenario, saying the limits are unlawfully weak.”

Growing Group Of Climate Activists Emphasizes Solutions Instead Of Challenges.

The *New York Times* (3/22, Buckley) reports on “a growing cadre of people, many of them young, who are fighting climate doomism, the notion that it’s too late to turn things around.” These environmental advocates “believe that focusing solely on terrible climate news can sow dread and paralysis, foster inaction, and become a self-fulfilling prophecy.” The activists “believe that staying stuck in climate doom only helps preserve a status quo reliant on consumerism and fossil fuels.”

Sierra Club Says Indiana Legislature Is Setting State On A “Dangerous Path.”

The *Indianapolis Star* (3/22) reports a “scorecard that grades Indiana legislators based on their votes in support of or against various environment-related bills has been released. In it, nearly two-thirds received a D or an F. Among them: the chairs of the House and Senate Environmental Affairs committees.” The Sierra Club’s Hoosier Chapter released “its report last week after the conclusion of the 2022 session.” The “group believes Indiana legislators are putting the state on a dangerous path, it said, and officials are refusing to listen to the concerns of Hoosiers.” Based on “the EPA’s Toxics Release Inventory, using data from 2020, the most recent, Indiana releases the third most chemicals and pollutants per square mile of any state.” Also, Indiana “is one of the worst states for carbon pollution, while another report last week found that Indiana has the most dirty waterways in the U.S.”

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Rules/Regulations/Policy

EPA Advisory Committee Recommends Agency Strengthen Soot Standards.

E&E Publishing (3/22, Reilly) reports the EPA Clean Air Scientific Advisory Committee sent a letter to EPA Administrator Michael Regan recommending that the agency strengthen its standards for soot, or PM2.5. The letter said, “The results support the conclusion that the current primary annual PM2.5 standard does not adequately protect public health.” All seven members “agreed with the conclusions of EPA career staff that the evidence warrants some tightening of the current threshold, albeit with some disagreement on how far to go, according to the letter and accompanying report.”

EPA To Restore Finding That Mercury, Air Toxic Standards Should Be Regulated.

Bloomberg BNA (3/23) reports “the Environmental Protection Agency recently proposed to restore the finding that it is ‘appropriate and necessary’ to use the Mercury and Air Toxic Standards (MATS) to regulate mercury emissions and other hazardous air pollutants from coal and oil-fired power plants.” According to Bloomberg, “The electric power industry is largely in compliance with the regulation,” but “this is the fourth time that the EPA has been forced to decide that regulating these emissions is

appropriate and necessary.” The standards have been “vulnerable to numerous legal challenges claiming that the EPA has not made the case for the regulation.”

Court Considers Suit Accusing EPA Of Unlawfully Banning Race-Vehicle Conversions.

Inside EPA (3/22) reports, “A federal appellate court is slated to hear arguments in the coming weeks charging that EPA unlawfully revised its decades-old policy that had allowed mostly amateur racecar drivers to convert street vehicles into racing ones, though the agency says the practice has always been barred and that only vehicles specifically built as race cars are exempted from emissions control requirements under the Clean Air Act (CAA).”

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Sustainable and Healthy Communities

DHL Express Announces Rollout Of 270 New Electric Vans.

The **Post & Parcel** (3/22) reports DHL Express on Tuesday “announced the roll-out of 270 new electric vans, which will be taking to roads across the country as part of its last-mile fleet.” Following “last year’s introduction of 50 electric vans to operate out of sites across the UK, this next phase demonstrates the business’ ongoing commitment to reaching its sustainability goals and the successful integration of electric vehicles into the network.” The 270 new vans “will enter operation between May and September, servicing over 30 different locations, including London, Manchester, Leeds, Birmingham, Bristol, Southampton Liverpool, Sheffield, Edinburgh, and Glasgow.” **GreenFleet** (3/22), **eDelivery (UK)** (3/22), and **MotorTransport (UK)** (3/22) also report.

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Toxics

Adverse Views Likely To Delay EPA’s Plan To Adopt ASTM’s PFAS Measure.

Behind a paywall, **Inside EPA** (3/22) reports, “EPA will likely have to delay its plan to quickly adopt an updated industry standard that added per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) into its methods for assessing potentially contaminated properties because stakeholders plan to file adverse comments that will force the agency to withdraw its direct final rule and instead move to a longer notice-and-comment process. “

Companies To Take Part In Minnesota PFAS Monitoring Plan.

Bloomberg BNA (3/22, Joyce) reports, "3M Corp., Honeywell Inc., and other companies with sites in Minnesota will take part in a new state monitoring plan to detect 'forever chemicals' that could be used to further regulate hundreds of industrial facilities, operating landfills, and community water systems." The "plan, which Minnesota Pollution Control Agency Commissioner Katrina Kessler announced Tuesday, is intended to measure releases of per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) at 379 facilities, which will have to pay for the monitoring over the next two years."

Wisconsin Residents Fight PFAS Contamination.

Spectrum News (3/21, Rodas) reports on its website, "Home owners in the Town of Peshtigo said they've fought for years to get some sort of accountability for PFAS contamination in their community." The article adds, "Jeff Lamont said accountability has finally arrived. He lives along the bay of Green Bay." Lamont's "water well is contaminated with PFAS." According to the article, "Wisconsin Attorney General Josh Kaul filed a lawsuit March 14 against Tyco Fire Products and Johnson Controls." Kaul's "suit alleges the companies contaminated the Marinette area for many years without doing enough to restore clean water."

In related coverage, the **Marinette (WI) Eagle Herald** (3/22, Kitkowski) reports, "On the heels of the Wisconsin Natural Resources Board (NRB) failure to move forward with protective PFAS groundwater standards, two town residents have turned to the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) for help." According to the article, "Impacted residents Jeff Lamont and Cindy Boyle have jointly filed a Citizen Petition for a Superfund Preliminary Assessment to evaluate the feasibility of moving the Peshtigo, Wisconsin PFAS contamination site through the Superfund/CERCLA process." The article adds, "According to petitioner Lamont, 'The responsible party, Tyco/Johnson Controls has failed to remediate the area which they have contaminated and the State NRB has failed to set ground water standards for the 1/3 of Wisconsin residents drinking from private drinking wells.'"

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Trash/Recycling/Solid Waste

Surge Into Plastic Recycling By Chemicals And Oil Groups Meets Pushback.

The **Financial Times** (3/23, Speed) reports, "The surge by the world's largest petrochemical and oil companies into plastic recycling as an industry "plan B" is in question, after a..."

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Wastes and Hazardous Wastes

ADAO Urges OMB To Support Broad Asbestos Reporting Rule.

In a paywalled article, *Inside EPA* (3/22) reports, “As EPA approaches its court deadline to propose a TSCA reporting rule for asbestos, a key group behind that requirement is renewing its push for a stringent rule, arguing in a recent meeting with the White House Office of Management and Budget (OMB) that the agency should set no de minimis reporting threshold, among other priorities.”

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Water

Cannon AFB Investigating Water Contamination.

KCBD-TV Lubbock, TX (3/22, Perry) reports, “The Air Force Civil Engineering Center (AFCEC) is installing groundwater monitoring wells to help determine the potential of contamination from Cannon Air Force Base.” The article adds, “In October, AFCEC started collecting soil and groundwater samples from landowners near the base to identify potential per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances.” According to the article, “Since PFAS contamination was discovered, the Air Force has replaced the Aqueous Film Forming Foam (AFFF) mixture in emergency response vehicles and hangar fire suppression systems to meet EPA guidelines.”

Cannon AFB Advances PFAS Remedial Investigation. KAMC-TV Lubbock, TX (3/22) reports, “Local landowners near CAFB provided property access allowing contractors to extract water and soil samples necessary to define the extent of PFAS substances in ground water.” The article adds, “In addition to the groundwater monitoring wells, an ongoing pilot study initiated by a \$16.6M Department of the Air Force-awarded contract in May 2021, will filter and return water to the aquifer.”

Jersey Water Works And New Jersey Future Win National Water Data Prize.

InsiderNJ (3/22) reports, “After receiving more than 50 applications from across the country, on Monday the Environmental Policy Innovation Center (EPIC) announced the six winners of the Water Data Prize.” The article adds, “Jersey Water Works (JWW) and New Jersey Future (NJF) won the award’s Equity category for their development of the New Jersey Water Risk and Equity Map and Jersey WaterCheck.” According to the article, “‘New Jersey public water systems are facing many expensive issues—lead service lines, PFAS/PFOS contamination, new laws regarding asset management, and more—that will force serious decisions about revenue needs and affordability,’ said Daniel J. Van Abs, Jersey WaterCheck Advisory Committee member.”

PepsiCo Announces Water Waste Reduction Goals On World Water Day.

Path To Purchase IQ (3/22) reports that in recognition of World Water Day on Tuesday, PepsiCo announced “goals to reduce water waste across their value chains.” The company “has committed to developing technology that will recover more than 50% of the water used in its potato chip manufacturing, as well as scale drip irrigation tech across 25,000 acres by 2025.” The article adds, “As part of its PepsiCo Positive (pep+) initiative to be net water positive by 2030, the company expanded safe water access to 8 million more people in 2021.”

ESG

New SEC Proposal Requiring Companies To Disclose Carbon Emissions Raises Questions About Standards.

The *Wall Street Journal* ([Request Article](#)) (3/22, Eaglesham) reports hundreds of companies have adopted climate pledges, but new SEC rules proposed Monday would require companies to disclose their carbon emissions, including emissions produced by their suppliers and customers. The SEC-required disclosures will not necessarily be comparable because they would allow individual companies to determine how they compute emissions created by their supply chain and customers.

Separately, the *Wall Street Journal* ([Request Article](#)) (3/22, Maurer, Broughton) says that under the new rules, companies likely would face higher compliance costs. However, investors say they are largely in favor of the proposal.

Former SEC Head Says The Regulator Is Overstepping With Its Climate Disclosure Policy.

Insider (3/22, Rosen) reports, "The Securities and Exchange Commission proposed new climate disclosure regulations Monday that would require companies to disclose emissions impacts, a plan that the former head of the regulator told CNBC on Tuesday oversteps the SEC's usual remit." The proposal would "require public companies to report emissions data from their operations, as well as obtain independent certification of their figures." Additionally, it would require "some companies to report data related to the emissions of customers and vendor." Former SEC chair Jay Clayton said, "What the SEC is doing here is in essence assuming a climate policy, because it's picking which metrics are important here and which ones aren't, and you can't do that unless you assume what the climate policy is."

ESG Investors Welcome SEC Climate Disclosure Rules.

Reuters (3/22) reports investors running ESG funds "welcomed the U.S. government's proposed new rule on corporate disclosure of climate-related risks and emissions, saying it would standardize reports that now are voluntary and vary widely in quality and breadth." The investors say the SEC's draft regulation, if passed, would enable investors to more easily judge how companies and industries are impacting the environment. The article notes that these responses could impact the final rule that the SEC passes. Sarah Bratton Hughes, Head of ESG and sustainable investing for American Century Investments in Kansas city said "Right now you have a lot of disparate information coming from different places. This should streamline how all investors, not just those focused on ESG investing, can look at the data." However, some investors would prefer that the SEC mandate include more "Scope 3" emissions, which refer to the emissions produced by a company's partners and suppliers. Leslie Samuelrich, President of Green Century Capital Management said, "It's a reasonable rule. Scope 3 is very difficult to measure, but for some sectors, like the food sector, it's where their emissions lie."

Companies Split On SEC's Climate Rules.

TIME (3/22) reports on the divide between companies on the Security and Exchange Commission's "more than 500-page proposal for a comprehensive new system that would require companies to disclose the risk climate change poses to their business as well as the emissions each company generates." Time says the new rule would "require companies to disclose the risks to their business posed by climate change," which "includes the threat posed by extreme weather and other effects of a warmer planet, such as water scarcity, as well as what's known as 'transition risks' that result from the world moving away from a fossil-fuel economy and towards a cleaner one." Time says the rules "aren't all that groundbreaking" as many companies have voluntarily adopted such standards, but there has still been a push "calling for mandatory disclosure." FedEx is listed among the companies that "previously voiced support for the SEC's proposal," along with Apple and Walmart, while the US Chamber of Commerce "has expressed skepticism at the changes."

California Cap-And-Trade Program Under Scrutiny.

The **Los Angeles Times** (3/22, Valdez) reports the state of California "has relied on a complicated market system of pollution credits to help reduce climate-warming greenhouse gas emissions." The cap-and-trade program "was the first of its kind in the U.S. when launched in 2013 and set the ambitious goal of slashing turn-of-the-century emission levels by 40% by the year 2030." But the program has been "faulted by environmental justice advocates for failing to improve the lives of low-income people of color living alongside major polluting facilities." Government officials are now "reevaluating the program" in light of such concerns.

Study Finds Few Banks Limiting Fossil Fuel Investment.

MarketWatch (3/22, Beals) reports Paris-based nonprofit Reclaim Finance, together with its research partners, claim in a report released Tuesday that less than half of the 150 major banks and FIs, some of which joined a high-profile climate pledge, have actually limited their business with the fossil fuel sector to the degree expected to limit global warming by 2050. The tracker, which looks at three indicators: "restrictions on new oil and gas projects, restrictions on companies developing new oil and gas projects and strategies to phase out oil and gas," found that more than half of the companies tracked, including 20 that signed onto the Glasgow Financial Alliance for Net Zero (GFANZ) have no policies governing their oil-and-gas business. For those that did have policies in place, the most common restrictions are bans on types of unconventional oil, with one third of firms limiting Arctic and oil sands work, while fewer have prohibitions on shale or deepwater oil. Alison Kirsch of the Rainforest Action Network, which worked on this research said, "The [tracker] confirms what [the upcoming] Banking on Climate Chaos report numbers reveal year after year: the loopholes in banks' policies are too big to stop billions from flowing to the oil and gas industry's expansion plans."

Europe Close To Enforcing Its ESG Rules On Foreign Firms.

Bloomberg (3/22, Schwartzkopff, Ainger) reports behind a paywall, "European lawmakers have agreed to force roughly 28,000 foreign subsidiaries to comply with the bloc's ESG rules, marking a blow to representatives for U.S. corporations who had lobbied for the opposite outcome. In a wide-reaching revamp of the EU's reporting requirements for non-financial firms, the bloc's parliament has dropped a planned exemption that had been backed by the American Chamber of Commerce to the European

Union, according to draft documents seen by Bloomberg. An announcement is expected on Wednesday, as part of a wider package of corporate reporting proposals.”

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Top National Stories in Industry

Federal Officials Propose Designating Long-Eared Bat As Endangered Species.

The AP (3/22, Flesher) reports the Administration on Tuesday “proposed designating the northern long-eared bat, once common but ravaged by a deadly fungus, as an endangered species.” In the mid-2000s, the population began to plummet when “colonies infected with white-nose syndrome were spotted in New York caves.” The US Fish and Wildlife Service warned the bat is likely to go extinct without a dramatic turnaround. The AP says the agency “is leading a campaign involving more than 150 agencies, private organizations and Native American tribes to research white-nose syndrome, reduce its presence where bats hibernate and help them recover.”

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Limetree Bay Refinery

EPA Warns Limetree Bay’s New Owners Of Permitting Hurdle.

E&E Publishing (3/22, Reilly) reports the EPA “told (3/22) the new owners of a shuttered U.S. Virgin Islands oil refinery that they may need a new Clean Air Act permit, a hurdle that could significantly slow any plan to reopen the plant.” Although “regulators are still gathering information, there are ‘strong indicators to suggest’ that the Limetree Bay refinery must get a Prevention of Significant Deterioration pre-construction permit before restarting operations, Liliana Villatora, an air branch chief in EPA’s New York City-based regional office, wrote in a letter today to lawyers for West Indies Petroleum Ltd. and Port Hamilton Refining and Transportation LLLP, which jointly bought the facility at a bankruptcy auction late last year.”

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